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FROM

Alfred Friedlander,
Cincinnati.

5 Jan. 1892.

Songs and Verses.

Songs and Verses.

BY
J. W. N.

Mrs Jennie Wolff Matter.



PRIVATELY PRINTED BY
ROBERT CLARKE & CO., CINCINNATI.

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Alfred Friedländer
Cincinnati.

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As when a timid child
From the sure shelter of its mother's gown
Peeps on the world with ever doubting gaze,
So 'neath the shadow of most partial praise,
My rhymelets seek to venture to the town,
To May Fairs, where, beguiled
As by a promised sugar plum the child,
By much encouragement, I dare to send
them.
Kind friends, befriend them.

SONGS AND VERSES.

WHAT MAY A WOMAN SAY?

TELL me, oh! thou muse of mine,
What may a woman say
Who with a turn for poesy
Is longing day by day
To give her thoughts expression
In most ladylike array?

Who would sing of primroses
And cowslip balls forever,
Of infant smiles, of sunset skies,
And streams that meet and sever?
Any one can use such rhymes
That is the least bit clever—
Tell me then, thou muse of mine,
What may a woman say?

His ladye's lips, his ladye's eyes,
Her brown, black, golden braid,
The poet sings them all; they are
His very stock in trade.

And he can praise her voice, her brow,
Her manner, meek or staid—
Tell me then, thou muse of mine,
What may a woman say ?

Golden glories, taper fingers,
Girdles, gowns, and gems,
Separate verses on the buckles,
Separate on the hems,
Separate on each sea shell ear,
With numerous other mems—
Tell me then, thou muse of mine,
What may a woman say ?

He can write of lingering kiss
On lips that kiss again ;
From dwelling on such things intense
True woman must refrain,
For many a wild and devious turning
Hath this treacherous lane—
Tell me then, thou muse of mine,
What may a woman say ?

LOVE IS THE BURDEN OF MY SONG.

Love is the burden of my song
And love my whole life's lilt,
And should for me the world go wrong,
My love on a rock has built
A castle grand with tower and moat,
Where none may come, till the bugle note
Of my lover's love call, clarion clear,
Shall cleave the air for my listening ear.

Then the drawbridge shall fall
At my cavalier's call,
And with open arms
From the world's alarms
I'll welcome my love to this castle of mine
own,
And ever of love, be the burden of my song.

QUIEN SABE.

Up and down, up and down,
Within my chamber's space,
Up and down, up and down,
With anxious step I pace.
Shall it be or not? I say,
Shall it be or nay?
How can I the future try
Who know naught of to-day?

Up and down and round about
Within my garden space,
Up and down and round about
In anxious thought I pace.
Ask the flowers, they will not say
Shall it be or nay,
Though I see they'd counsel me
They know naught of to-day.

Hearts-ease is for memory,
Sage for time to come,
Pansies too are for the past,
Forget-me-nots for some.

Shall it be or not? I say,
Shall it be or nay?
How can I the future try
Who know naught of to-day?

IF CHOICE WERE MINE.

If choice of death were mine—
Strange thought, whence comest thou?—
If choice of death were mine,
I think I could resign
Me easiest to the sea.
If choice of place were mine—
I marvel still at thee,
Thou haunting thought of mine;
I'd choose where sea and far horizon meet,
Thither by swift oars carried be, with sweet,
Sad, tear-blind eyes still straining from the
shore.
And laid upon the gently swelling main,
So glide into the otherwhere, that pain
Were swallowed up in wonder, while they
fain
Would know, or sea or air had taken me.
If choice of time were mine—
Strange thought, art satisfied?—
If choice of time were mine,
Most meet 't would seem where eve to night
is bride,

While lingering sun rays yet the moon-
beams brave
And storm clouds gathering mock the
darkling wave,
And heaven and sea grown one, then would
I be
From earthly ken swept to eternity.

TOO LATE.

FORTUNE, the fickle jade, one morn arose
And filled with bonbons all her cunning
pockets,
And thought, I'll hie me quickly now to
those
I love, ere yet th' old year morose, shall
lock its
Doors upon me, never to unclose.

Gayly she sallied forth, her good intent
Beaming in every feature, as she went
Around her played the music of the spheres,
That melody which mortal never hears
Till of his senses all she has bereft him,
He wakes to find naught but the memory
left him.

Gayly, I say, she started, but the Fates
Knew well her foibles, and before the gates
Across her path, a brooklet clear they spun,
And as from stone to stone she stept, she
glanced

Upon the mirrored semblance, and en-
tranced
She stooped to kiss—who would not—such
illusion ?
And thus she brought about this dire con-
fusion,
Alack-a-day ! from every pocket rolled
The gifts of precious gems and gold galore,
And as she rose, the old year's farewell
toll'd,
And closed the grewsome gates forever
more.

WHEN youth and age together wed
 'Tis dubbed May and December,
Surely of all who use the phrase
 But very few remember,
'Tis spring perennial that prompts
 Good age to seek for lovers,
While youth that yokes with tottering age,
 The wintry heart discovers.

SAID THE MAIDEN.

COME, said the summer, see the lush rose
blowing;
Deep in dells of verdure, wells of rich de-
light are flowing,
Every garland twined for thee, to bind thee
in love's toils,
Haste while yet my day is full, and naught
its beauty spoils.

Nay, said the maiden, summer woods too
dark are,
I should die of surfeit strong—maiden
joys are staying.
She said, I'll wait till springtime comes,
'Tis sweet to go a-maying.

Come, said the autumn, I'll give thee all
my treasure—
The sparkling wine, from lusty vine, and
rosy fruits, full measure,
Gay dances 'round the harvest home; and
'neath the harvest moon
Such frolics, as the curious sun, comes spy-
out too soon.

Said the maiden, not for me
The pleasures thou 'rt displaying.
She said, I'll wait till springtime comes,
'Tis sweet to go a-maying.

Come, said the winter, my rudest winds are
jolly;
I much have stored of autumn's hoard, and
summer's wealth, gay holly
My crowning boast I hang on high—all
lovers own its worth—
Rare joys I hold, and manifold, mine the
true time of mirth.

Said the maiden, not for me
The pleasures thou 'rt displaying.
She said, I'll wait till springtime comes,
'Tis sweet to go a-maying.

Come, said the springtide, mine the time
of mating:
Every lad is debonair, every lass is wait-
ing,
Every leaf is pushing forth, every bud is
filling,
Every tender blade of grass with sapient
life is thrilling.

Ah! said the maiden, long for thee I've
waited.

List! The wind inviting blows, welcom-
ing boughs are swaying.

She said, now prithee speed the swain,
And we will go a-maying.

DEVOTION.

I know not if thy face be fair,
Or art thou formed in beauty's mold;
I know not if thy mind be stored,
With love of books and tongues of old;
All these have worth, I must confess,
And oft upon their charms I dwell,
'T is not for good thou should'st possess,
But spite of faults I love thee well.

HOPE'S SONG.

HOPE sang her once a song,
And all the summer long
Her eyes so tender grew
That all the wide world knew
The secret she would hide.

The lyre hope laid aside,
And she, her maiden pride,
And in her eyes there came
So deep a glance of shame,
That all the wide world knew.

LOVE'S GIFT.

Love brought to him a gift,
A dewy bud half cleft,
With vandal hand and swift
He brushed the dew, and left
The ravished flower to die.

Then Love did make reproach
And scorned the dastard deed
He smiled at her approach,
Plucked valiantly a weed,
And flaunted it on high.

OH SUFFER AND BE STILL!

Oh suffer and be still !
Thou hast no other will,
Art but a woman weak,
Must gentle be and meek,
Play well thy role to end,
The good Lord he forbend
Thou ever drop thy mask.
Oh suffer and be still !

Oh suffer and be still !
Thou hast no other will,
Thy right divine maintain
To suffer, nor complain,
For thou wert made to wear
The thorns, the burden bear,
And this thy heavy task,
To suffer and be still !

Oh suffer and be still !
Thou hast no other will,
When soul is worn and faint,
Shun thou the cold world's taint ;

When weary heart is torn,
Pain must be bravely borne,
And smiles must wreathe thy mask,
Oh suffer and be still !

Oh suffer and be still !
Thou hast no other will,
Make thou no vain conceit
Of what thou deemest meet;
Keep close thy banner furled,
The edict of the world
A favor thou must ask,
Oh suffer and be still !

Oh suffer and be still !
Thou hast no other will,
If false thy lover prove,
Bid calm farewell to love;
If false be proven thy friend,
Say friendship too must end,
Nor dare to drop thy mask,
But suffer and be still !

RONDEL.

THE curve of a throat or the scent of roses,
A feathery fan or a small glove white,
They bring me back to that starry night
Where the tale of our romance well nigh
closes.

All that you looked, ere my heart you
froze, is
Buried for aye there and out of sight;
The curve of a throat or the scent of roses,
They bring me back to that starry night.

Ah! how shall I find then where true re-
pose is,
And how shall I hide from the mocking de-
light,
When the door of our past, with a wind-
puff light
Blows ever ajar and my love discloses,
With the curve of a throat or the scent of
roses?

SONG.

WHEN care her sordid mantle drops to-night
And life is clean and free,
I'll clothe my thoughts in garb of shining
light,
And dream, my love, of thee.

Not while corroding toil disturbs my days,
Shall love the mirror blur,
That held at quiet ev'en to the gaze
No wandering breath may stir.

Too pure my love, too deep devotion lies,
For daily use and wear;
Only the night, with kindly, shining eyes,
My orison may hear.

Only the night—the sweet and gracious
moon
The winds from scented lea,
All sounds and sights that grace fair Dian's
noon
May know—I think of thee.

OTHELLO.

NAY, chide me not, I would not give thee
pain;

If thou be wrathful, wherein lies my
gain?

'Tis that I love thee o'er well, I distrust
thee;

'Tis that I fear to other eyes thou must
be

As good to look upon as mine have found
thee;

And when the fickle flattering moths sur-
round thee

My mad brain whirls and frenzy fills my
soul.

See, humbled now, I bow me low before
thee;

Thou must, thou canst but see that I adore
thee.

Then cease thy weeping, look once more
upon me,

With that bewitching smile that erst while
 won me,
Take once again into thine arms of snow
This swarthy heart, that still doth love thee
 so,
Or let it burst from out its earthly gaol.

NATURE'S HEALING.

GREAT discontent lies deep mine heart
within,
Naught seemeth good this goodly day to
me,
And all the world looks dark, and marred
with sin;
With loathing filled my weary thoughts I
flee,
And haste me to a favorite spot where
oft
When thus distraight I take my way.
The soft
Half coo and half complaint of mating
dove,
Jars on my fretted hearing's o'er-wrought
sense;
The clear spring's trickling fall I always
love
Sounds like the rushing of a torrent
dense.
Naught seemeth good, yet where at last
I've laid

My throbbing brow, the net of light and
shade
Plays on my couch, such thriftly nature
weaves
Of last year's curled moss and crackling
leaves,
And decks with blossoms fresh as for a
bride.
Pink-veined anemones spring by my side,
And purple violets their perfume bring
To new-born spring as votive offering.

Sweet to the heart as mem'ries of dead love,
And sad as these, the south wind softly
bloweth
And lures my thoughts from earth to where
above
The dream clouds stoop to kiss the verdant
grove,
Whose nodding tree tops keep most curious
time
To my minds aimless sway and wordless
rhyme.
Soft, soft upon my closing lids are
pressed
The popped finger tips of heavenly
sleep—

And so I rest me well on earth's broad
breast.

Where once again my eyes behold the
day—

Gone vain regrets, fled aspirations deep;
Soothed, calmed, at peace, I wend my
homeward way.

SONG.

I PRESSED thy hand at parting, thou didst
say me nay;
A smile so soft on dimpled cheek, and
roguish lip 'gan play,
I dared to kiss that tempting cheek,
I dared those honeyed lips to seek;
E'en now I scarce believe it true,
Thou didst not say me nay.

I asked might I return, love, thou didst
not say me nay;
And now I have nor rest by night, nor have
I peace by day,
And still I fear to come again,
And half misdoubt my wondrous gain,
And half misdoubt that I have dreamed
thou didst not say me nay.

What cheer, sweetheart! Good cheer,
sweetheart!
The world, if harsh, is wide;
Then prithee have no fear, sweetheart,
I'll still by thee abide,
Come weal or woe, 'gainst friend or foe
(Alas! how near allied),
Heart pres't to heart, hands clasped we'll
stand,
As bridegroom and as bride,
In pain we'll plight our troth anew,
And one old saw deride—
For when want across our threshold steps,
I'll chain Sir Love inside.

LOVE'S REFRAIN.

Love is bliss and love is pain ;
List ye who to love would fain—
Love is bliss and love is pain.

Love is pain, and yet 'tis bliss ;
List ye who believe not this,
That love's a pain while yet a bliss.

I asked the birds that fro and to
About my garden hedgerow flew,
Two on a hawthorn spray were swinging,
And one made answer, softly singing:

“ My mate and I
We live on high,
We bill and coo
The summer through.
I feed her well,
She stays by me—
Our pretty eggs
We love, and we
Think this is love,
And so agree.

Both—But when the frosty days draw nigh,
To warmer climes we quickly fly.
All this we leave without regret—
To love—is to forget—forget—”
To love is to forget, no ruth
Have birds and so they trilled the truth.

A maiden and a youth, I spied
Walking demurely side by side.
My pretty lass, what's love, said I?
With rosy blush she made reply:

’T is to think but of one,
To dream and to ponder,
’T is to fear, yet to long,
To yearn, yet to wonder;
To touch but soft tones,
To sing soft and low,
’T is a pain yet a bliss—
Naught know I but this.”

But the lad, ah! the lad, held the shy
maiden close.

And he answered, while she blushed again
like the rose:

“’T is an agony great,
A manner distraight;
A meeting, a greeting,
Soft plaint, wooing tender;
Low sighs, sweet surrender,

A rapture entrancing,
Possession enhancing."

Thus answered the youth,
And he spake but the truth.

Yet once more would I ask,
Ere I finish my task,
Yet once more the refrain
Love is bliss, if 't is pain :
He—"A helpmeet, most tender—"
She—"Adviser, defender—"
Both—"A bond strong,
And life long;
Kind words life's loads lightening,
Kind acts blessings brightening."
Thus said they, and, in sooth,
They spake glorious truth.

THE MIRROR'S TALE.

FRIEND, when upon your mirror next you
gaze,

Look straight into the eyes that meet you
there,

And study well the strange familiar face,
Then, tell me how in meeting them you fare.

For I have tried to read the oracle,
But 'neath the cold look of my counterpart
Staring me out of countenance, eyes fell
And face grew hard, and with a nervous
start

I shunned the image harsh.

Perchance the spark
That leaps into the window of the soul
By stranger lights is drawn from out the
dark,

As smiles by aliens oftenest are won
When kindred hearts a-hungering go, who
first

Should claim the boon, but ever gain the
worst.

THE STIRRUP CUP.

THE portal wide stands all unclosed,
The sunlight gleams athwart the court
Where pawing stands the restive steed
His master's friend in fray or sport.

Bravely equipped in clanging mail,
See from the hall the gallant stride,
Bid kind farewell to all beside,
Then turn him to his bonny bride.

"Now, ladye mine, be stout of heart,
Gird thou my sword, my helmet don,
Fill me, dear one, ere I depart,
Fill to the brim the stirrup cup.

"And bid God speed, and pray God keep
Thy lover in his holy care,
While I, from thy sweet hands quaff deep
And long, the parting stirrup cup."

RESURGENS.

Cold, dark, and gray the dead world
Lies on the bier of space;
No star my dreary vigil lights—
The moon hath hid her face.
Nor sound of living bird or beast,
Nor stir of leaf on tree;
Hushed e'en the much complaining brook,
So stilled can nature be.

Chill blow the night winds, and the dew
Lies damp on shuddering flowers;
Chill blows life's wind across my heart,
Sad heart that many hours
Hath mourned, and moaned, and prayed to
pass
With the dark night away,
Hath moaned, and mourned, and scarce
believed
The promise of the day.

But far across the sleeping sea,
'Neath cloud banks in the east,

A long, low, lingering line of light
Steals softly—now increased,
From cloud to cloud tip leaps a flame
As 't were a pean of light,
And each fire-tinted cloud should swell
The chorus of delight.

And now, upon its fleecy bed,
Behold the sun's new birth;
Old mystery most miraculous,
New glory given to earth.
The birds sing out their morning praise,
All life's astir and waking,
The dawn hath come and brought new balm,
E'en to the heart that's breaking.

AS MEN HAVE DONE AT A LATER
DAY.

WHEN earth was young and love was new,
And the fairies lived on honey and dew,
Three maidens sat in a leafy bower,
Nor dreamt as yet of love's potent power;
Though unconscious, like summer sun-
ripened fruit,
They were ready to drop at the first strong
suit.

The one she span, the other, she drew,
The third, she cut the wove flax through.
And blithesome they sang, though their
songs were few,
For earth was young and love was new.

One, stately and pale as a Michaelmas lily;
One, canny and brown as an untamed filly,
But the third was the trio's crown, I trow,
With heaven blue een and low white brow,
Where wandered in wanton joy fair tresses
That caught their hue from the sun's ca-
resses.

The one, she span, the other, she drew,
The third, she cut the wove flax through.
And blithesome they sang, though their
 songs were few,
For earth was young and love was new.

From over the hills where the snow-clouds
 lay,
O'er flower spread meadows one fateful day
Came rider and steed on fortune's quest—
Ah! three small words may teach the rest.
He came, he smiled, each foolish maid
Thought but to her his glances strayed—
He came, he smiled, and he rode away
As men have done at a latter day.
And one maiden span while the other drew,
And the third, she cut the wove flax
 through.
But never again did their young hearts
 waken
To tremors so sweet, though so rudely
 shaken,
As, all unsought, love's first dart flew,
When earth was young and love was new.

LULLABY.

Sing softly, Bambino, sing softly with me,
While slowly we rock like the birds on the
tree;

Sing softly, my baby, peep out, thou wilt
see—

I sing for thee still.

Sleep softly, Bambino, each bird in her nest
Is hushing 'mid green leaves her birdlings
to rest;

Sleep softly, my baby, close held to my
breast—

I watch by thee still.

Sleep softly, Bambino, when little ones
sleep

The angel babes ever their timid souls
keep;

Sleep softly, my baby, and sigh not so deep—
They care for thee still.

Sleep softly, Bambino, each one wears a
crown,

And through the star windows on thee they
smile down;

Sleep softly, my baby, nor tremble nor
frown—

. They watch o'er thee still:

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